Forest Health Protection
Pacific Southwest Region

Date: August 30, 2010
File Code: 3420

To: Thomas Contreras, Forest Supervisor, Mendocino National Forest

Subject: Biological Evaluation of Lucky George Thin – Covelo Ranger District (FHP Report No. N10-011)

On August 17-19, 2010, Cynthia Snyder (Entomologist) and Pete Angwin (Plant Pathologist) from Forest Health Protection visited the Mendocino National Forest to assess future thinning projects requesting FHP funding.

On August 18, we were joined by Chad Atwood, Gary Urdahl (Upper Lake Ranger District) and Steve Overton (TEAMS) to look at the Lucky George Timber Sale.

Observations and recommendations for the planned projects areas are as follows:

Lucky George Timber Sale

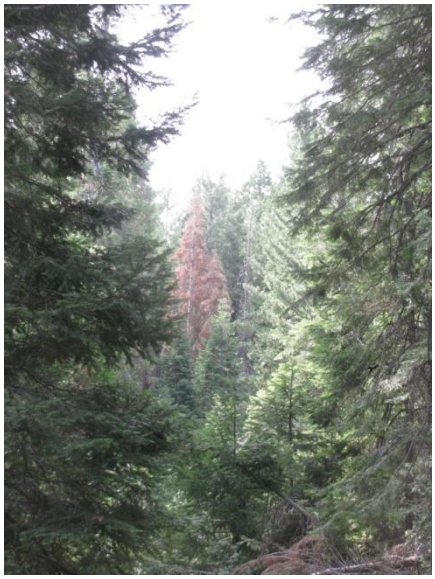

Figure 1. Dense, uneven-aged, mixed conifer stand.

The Lucky George Timber Sale area is in the island of matrix forest surrounded by the Yolla Bolly – Middle Eel Wilderness Complex. The Yellow Fire of 2008 burned over 100,000 acres near the area, mostly in wilderness. This project is still in the planning process and NEPA is no complete. Stands are primarily uneven-aged, mixed conifer with ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, white fir, sugar pine and incense cedar with a hardwood component on the poorer sites (Figure 1). We visited units 11 (N40º00.595', W123º03.773'), 10, 7, 2 (N40º01.075', W123º04.116'), 9, 14 (N40º00.358', W123º03.529') and 15 ("Clark's Camp").

Unit 11 is primarily a Douglas-fir and white fir site with scattered old (30+ inches DBH) ponderosa and sugar pines. The stand is very dense with evidence of dwarf mistletoe in the white fir and ponderosa pine. A large (38 inches DBH), recently dead

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ponderosa pine had evidence of western pine beetle and red turpentine beetle. Large diameter white fir were found with evidence of fir engraver beetle and ambrosia beetles. It was recommended that the District retain the large old ponderosa and sugar pines thinning wide around them. Removal of white fir was an expressed interest by Gary Urdahl.

Other stands that were visited had a higher percentage of ponderosa pine. In unit 2 flatheaded wood borers were found in Douglas-fir and new western pine beetle-caused mortality was noted in ponderosa pine near the edge of the Yellow Fire. Unit 15 was a relatively open stand with clumps of ponderosa pine and oak. It is most likely an oak site with pine encroachment. Most pines were heavily infected with dwarf mistletoe and starting to get western pine bark beetle attacks. This stand would be a nice meadow restoration site.

Summary
These stands are very dense and have current bark beetle activity. Thinning would reduce risk of bark beetle outbreak and make stands more resilient to fire and drought. I would recommend that they be considered for WBBI funding in the near future, when NEPA is completed.

If you have any questions regarding this report and/or need additional information please contact Cynthia Snyder at 530-226-2437 or Pete Angwin at 530-226-2436.

/s/ Cynthia Snyder

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CC: Nancy Mulligan, Chad Atwood, Gary Urdahl, Pete Angwin, Sheri Smith, Julie Lydick and Phil Cannon